

BMHA Newsletter

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA



Volume 15, Number 1

Jan-Apr 2004

BMHA Forum at Hamvention 2004!

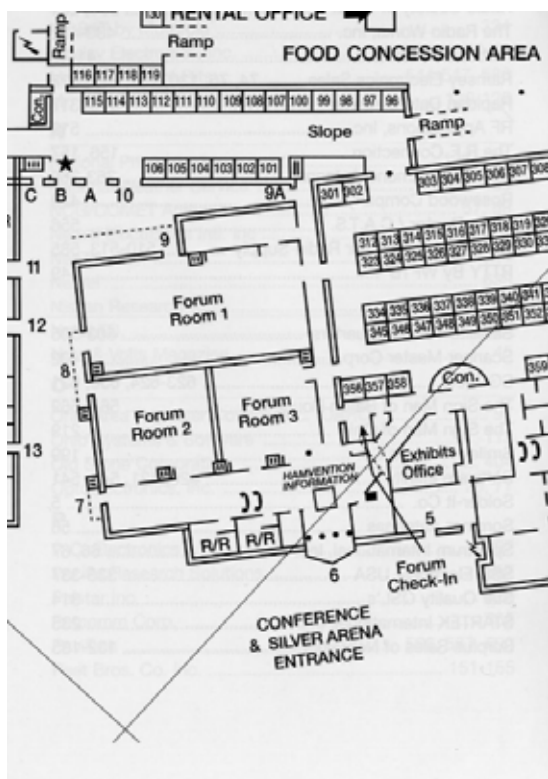
May 16, 2004

The 14th annual BMHA forum is set for Sunday, May 16th at 10:15 am in Room 3. This is next to the location we have held the forum the last few years. We have been allocated only one hour from 10:15-11:15, but as in past years, we can meet in the hallway outside the room until time to officially meet in the room. This arrangement gives us plenty of time to socialize and exchange ideas.

Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U, is our forum moderator this year. As program details are still developing, be sure to check the BMHA Website <http://www.LaFetra.com/BMHA/> frequently. If you would like to volunteer as a speaker at our BMHA forum, please contact me at nf0n@arrl.net

Plans are also forming for the Annual Hamvention BMHA Bike Ride on May 15th. Make plans to bring your bike and ride with us. Look for details on the BMHA website <http://www.LaFetra.com/BMHA/> for any last minute details.

Mike Nickolaus, NF0N



Bicycle Mobile Hams of America's Thirteenth Annual Hamvention Ride

**Tipp City Park, Tipp City, Ohio
Ride Begins 3:30 PM Saturday, May 15, 2004**

Come and meet your fellow BMHA members and check out their bicycle-mounted transceivers. Set up a special-event station. You can bring your bike and come on the ride, or relax in the park and perhaps have a QSO with those of us on the ride.

General Information

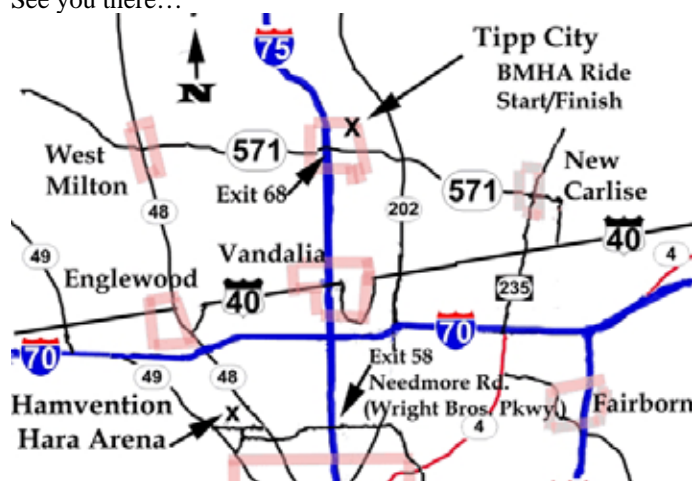
Once again the ride will start from the Municipal Park in Tipp City, Ohio. Tipp City is on Interstate 75, about 10 miles northeast of the Hamvention site at Hara Arena.

The ride will leave at 3:30 PM EDT. If you'd like to come up early for a snack or some socializing, we'll be there by about 2:00 PM. We'll be in the North parking lot (same as last year). Don't worry about finding us, it's not as if you could hide a bunch of biker-hams in a park that size. The ride itself is normally an easy 27 miles with stops thrown in occasionally to keep everyone together, and slow enough for some meaningful conversation (or DXing).

For the latest details, the map, and some interesting pictures of past rides, see the BMHA website.

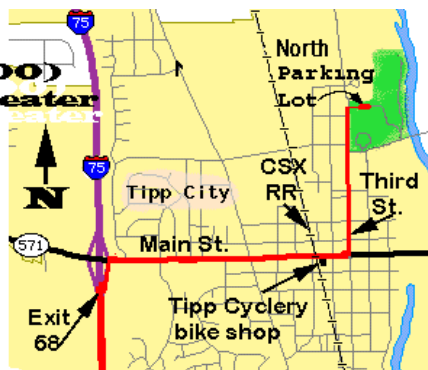
Send me an email if you have any ideas, or just to let me know you're coming. (It's always nice to know how many people to plan for.) But there's no registration or anything formal like that. Just show up!

See you there...

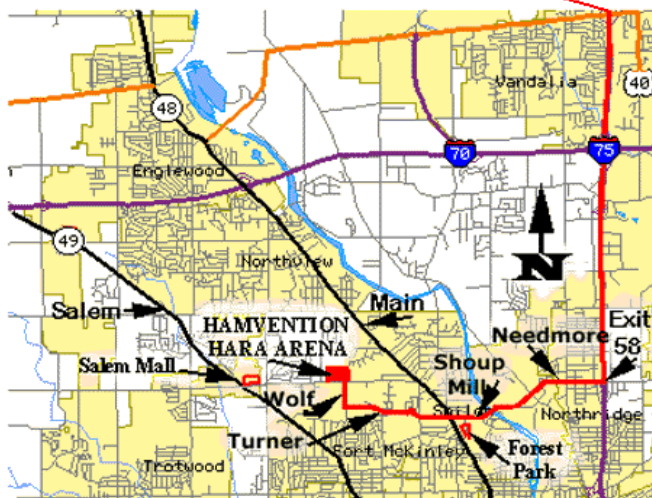


TALK-IN
145.23 (-600)
WSFW repeater

**Tipp
City**



Hara Arena Area



First, go east to I-75. If you're in front of Hara, you'll notice that Wolf Rd. dead ends into Shiloh Springs Rd. (the main road that Hara is on) at the traffic light right in front. Take Wolf Rd. south about a quarter-mile to the first intersection. This is Turner Rd. Turn left (you can only turn left), and stay on this road until you get to I-75 (about three miles).

NOTE: Turner Rd. changes into Shoup Mill Rd. when you cross Main St. It then becomes Needmore Rd. when you cross the Stillwater River. HOWEVER, all of these roads together are known as (and usually marked) Wright Bros. Pkwy.

When you get to I-75 and Needmore go NORTH (left, across the bridge).

Look for the Tipp City exit (EXIT 68) in about 10 miles. Turn right (east) at the top of the ramp. This is Main St. in Tipp City.

Take Main St. into "downtown" (about a mile). You will cross a railroad track (Tipp Cyclery is on the right as you cross if you need anything for your bike).

Turn left (north) at the second traffic light past the railroad. This is THIRD ST.

Look for the park on the right after four or five blocks. You'll see a civil-war era cannon on the left, in front of the American Legion. The north parking lot entrance is about a block further north. We'll be around the parking lot someplace. **Talk-in is on 145.23 (-).**

BMHA NEWSLETTER

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BMHA NEWSLETTER is a quarterly publication of the Bicycle Mobile Hams of America – Jan, Apr, July, and Oct. Permission is given to reproduce any of the material in this issue, provided the author is credited and the source is acknowledged as "from the Newsletter of the Bicycle Mobile Hams of America." Please send a clip to the address below. We welcome articles, suggestions, letters, announcements, photos, artwork – anything pertaining to the combining of bicycling with amateur radio.

The BMHA is affiliated with Adventure Cycling Association, the League of American Bicyclists, and *Worldradio*.

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA (BMHA)

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ABOUT BMHA

For the information of our first-time readers

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America got its start when a 'Stray' in the June '89 QST magazine asked to "get in touch with hams who operate their radios while bicycle-mobile," signed by Hartley Alley, NA0A. Twenty-five hams responded, filled out questionnaires, and received a summary of the collected data.

In April of '90 we had our first BMHA Forum at the Dayton HamVention. We played to a packed house, overflowed the room, and added 54 names to our mailing list. Our eight subsequent forums have drawn increasingly larger audiences, and now BMHA is firmly established as a 'regular' at this world-renowned event.

This is the forty-seventh issue of our periodic newsletter, which has become *the* clearinghouse for the exchange of info and ideas for the hams who go on the air from their bicycles.

BMHA membership puts you in touch with a friendly and helpful group of bike-riding hams. You'll make contacts through our membership directory, E-mail address list, E-mail discussion group, the annual meeting and Forum at the Dayton HamVention and other regional meetings, and of course through the BMHA Newsletter, which has articles on bike trips, antennas, other gear, operating tips, etc. A membership application is on the next-to-last page.

EDITOR'S NOTEPAD

by Scott A. Farrell, KE4WMF

A LONG TIME...

The last time I sent a Newsletter, I was about to transfer across the country. Before the transfer, it seemed I'd have lots of time for the Newsletter once stationed ashore. This couldn't be further from the truth. First, there was the 4000-mile transfer itself. Then, we decided to BUY a home rather than rent. Anyone who's purchased a home knows this isn't always a smooth process... especially in a seller's market. Once we were in our home, but not really settled, we were socked by Hurricane Isabel. Eventually, I settled into my new routine at work.

I am in charge of a 24-week school that trains electronics technicians on how to operate and maintain the MK 92 Fire Control System, the Coast Guard's primary shipboard self-defense weapon system. We convene four classes annually, running day AND night classes. This has turned out to be a fairly demanding job. In addition to that, I've been chosen to attend the Navy's technical school for the AN/SPQ-9B, the latest, most sophisticated anti-ship missile defense radar (affectionately referred to as "the Spook-9"). With this training, I will act as the Coast Guard's Spook-9 subject matter expert. The Coast Guard is entering the largest capitalization in its history in which dozens of new ships will be placed into service. The Spook-9 is the preferred radar for the new National Security Cutter. So it's pretty exciting to be a part of Coast Guard history.

All of this change, while good for me, must mean the demise of my position as sole BMHA Newsletter Editor... at least the role of which I'm currently performing. In short, I will be committing a lot of time and effort in areas outside BMHA AND other areas of interest. Even my Volkswagen club activities have subsided to a point. I certainly won't get to the point where "all work and no play makes Scott a dull boy." But I don't have the energy to continue editing at the pace I did before having a young child to chase. ;-) I regret this; but it is necessary. Visit my site at <http://www.StealthTDI.com/HomePage.html> to see all that I'm into. But enough about me...

MAJOR CHANGES AHEAD

BMHA certainly isn't the same club it was when Hartley Alley, NA0A (SK), was at the helm. New "staff members" combined with a change of the times requires the club to grow in a different direction. One of the most significant labors involved with the Newsletter involves its printing, reproduction, binding, labeling, and mailing. It's also relatively expensive. A very large majority of our club members have access to computers and/or the Internet. Therefore, it seems more logical to switch to an all-electronic format. Electronic distribution is less expensive, less labor intensive, and easy to manage than the paper format.

The lack of Newsletters lately has certainly made members wonder what the club is doing for them. The BMHA *YahooGroups!* has flourished. Not only has it been a temporary replacement for the Newsletter; it's also our only

method of quick communication on a group basis. However, over 80% of the users there are not BMHA members. These people, whether they hold amateur license or not, are welcome to join the club. Obviously, we're not going to suddenly drop all of these members from the list. We as club officers have been giving our members very little lately for their club dues. However, expect some changes in dues, *YahooGroups!* membership guidelines, and other areas. There's still a lot of brainstorming ahead. But you can expect BMHA to go ALL-ELECTRONIC (either web-based, e-mail based, or CD on a case-by-case basis). Also expect the BMHA *YahooGroups!* discussion list to be managed via paid membership in the near future. The exact amount of the dues has not yet been settled. But we're looking for something fair, including a free trial period to see if BMHA is for you. Back issue CDs will be available and we are considering sending them to all paid members.

WANT TO BE A PART OF THE CHANGE?

BMHA member Phil Michaelis, KC2GFV, is a man with a mission. He is spearheading an effort to bring BMHA back up to speed with the sort of passion with which Hartley drove the club. A mission-oriented message from Phil can be found on Page 6.

You will see that Phil has an idea for a larger BMHA Staff and is willing to be contacted directly to discuss ideas and options. The club has been driven by four people over the past few years. Like most of you, these people have full-time jobs and lives that do not revolve around BMHA. The number of people carrying the club is something that Phil wants to change. For example, he envisions a Newsletter staff. Personally, I'll be pleasantly surprised to see it. But I would find it much easier to truly EDIT a Newsletter rather than conceive, draft, format, and publish most of the Newsletter content from scratch. Let's see where these changes take us together...

73,

Scott A. Farrell, KE4WMF



From the Vice President

You haven't seen me often under the guise of the VP, as I've done most of my work under the "webmaster" job description. As you will read elsewhere in the Newsletter from Phil Michaelis, KC2GVF, we are looking for some new blood to help with articles for the newsletter, other activities, and just-plain having fun helping the BMHA thrive. Our founder (Hartley Alley, NA0A) was an incredible personality who drove the club through its first decade and more with a personal drive and energy which no single human can match.

Before Hartley retired and became a silent key, he cajoled and (good-naturedly) arm-twisted the current staff to keep things going. Although we've been successful doing this, we are slowing down and need to return the BMHA to its original status as a group of like-minded bicycling hams who have fun doing and sharing what we love.

Phil has provided a great inspirational start to this renewal, and those of us on the "old board" would like to welcome him aboard -- as well as others of you who feel similarly. If we can have elections in Iraq, it is time to provide the opportunity to recruit and elect new BMHA officers to the board.

You'll hear more from us as we go forward. We hope to keep both the website and the *YahooGroups!* with fresh information so that you won't be "in the dark" as the transition unfolds.

Skip, AA6WK
BMHA-Webmaster@LaFetra.com

WEBMASTER'S CORNER

As many of you may have noticed, there hasn't been much new in the "look and feel" of the website. However, we are up-to-date on small changes, keeping the membership roster current, and "stuff like that."

A quick pass through the current Survey shows that 33 responses have been made, with the following results:

Membership demographics:

- 30 men completed the survey, and 3 women.
- 25 are less than thirty years old, 17 between thirty-one and fifty, and 13 are over fifty.
- You live where it snows (24 yes/7 no)
- You don't ride as much in winter as summer (6 yes/23 no)
- Two-thirds take precautions to keep your radio out of winter weather (20 yes/10 no)
- Mixed preference for articles on winter riding and operating procedures.
- Lots of desire for "how-to" articles on mounting radios and antennas on bicycles, and stories and personal experiences.

My personal favorite from the survey is the comment, "I was riding in a local park and saw a man setting up gear I didn't recognize. I stopped to ask him what he was doing and he told me about the organization, although I don't think he belongs, but maybe he does. So I decided to check it out." Shortly after this issue hits the press, I'll put a new Survey on the website. Perhaps this time I'll focus on how your radio and riding habits have changed over time.

In other news, we have finished scanning the entire set of back-issues of the BMHA Newsletter. We're not ready to "publish" them because they are not indexed and we haven't yet figured out the logistics of distribution (back issues are still available in paper form by writing to the Club's address). You can see a sample of this result by looking at the back-issues section of our Website -- I've put up a copy of the very-first BMHA Newsletter ever published.

In my personal news, I've changed the way my antenna mounts to my bicycle (you've seen the old arrangement in a recent back-issue of the Newsletter).

The old scheme worked well, but the bungee cords on my handlebar bag finally gave up the ghost and I wasn't able to replace it with the same sort of a bag. So I got inventive and "invented" a new mounting arrangement that seems to work well. I'll share my solution with the membership in a future Newsletter. I'm still in the camp that prefers my antenna on the front of the bike (although most of you seem to be rear-antenna types).

Finally, you will read about some changes to the BMHA as we call for more volunteers and shift to an electronic-centered distribution. We will be reformatting the website and keeping it current with information about what is happening. Check in frequently during the transition!.

Until next time,

Skip AA6WK

BMHA-Webmaster@LaFetra.com



Kenwood's TH-F6A Tri-Band Handheld

Skip La Fetra, AA6WK



For the first time in my 22 years as a ham, I'm on 220 MHz! But that's not why I bought this radio.

Kenwood makes a dandy little palm-size Tri-band (2 meters, 220 MHz, and 440 MHz) radio with lots of goodies and a 5-watt output on each of the three bands. The photo shows this dandy little radio next to the optional alkaline battery pack.

I haven't yet put the radio on the bicycle (it is only a few days old), but already I'm having lots of fun with it. Even the included rubber-duck antenna (SMC connector) is pretty darn decent – especially for a tri-band compromise antenna.

The main feature of the TH-F6A for me is that it is truly dual-band simultaneous receive. This means that I can easily:

- * Monitor two channels (even on the same band)
- * Monitor one channel while also scanning (with many flexible scan options)
- * Monitor (or scan) the ham bands while listening to broadcast radio

The radio does this by having two VFOs. The "A" VFO can be thought of as ham-band-only. The "B" VFO is DC-to-daylight (100 kHz to 1.2 GHz). When the "B" VFO is on a ham frequency, it can also transmit. You can even listen to WWV (and the radio receives USB, LSB, and CW as well as AM and FM -- wide and narrow). However, I'll warn you that a VHF/UHF rubber duck ain't the best thing to catch a strong signal from WWV!

The radio has 400 memories arranged as 8 groups of 50 memories each. You can scan all memories, just the ones in your current ham band, or any of the 8 50-memory groups. You can also link several 50-memory groups together, so you can scan 100, 150, or 200 memories.

All memories can be identified with an 8-character label (lowercase and uppercase). And for a \$30 cable, you can download the computer-interface software FREE from Kenwood. I was programming the TH-F6A from my computer within 10 minutes of first opening the box.

Here is an example taken from my real life where the VFOs can be creatively used:

- I have memories 200..210 with my commonly-used ham channels
- I have memories 220..235 with local police, ambulance, and "scanner" frequencies.

When in the "A" VFO, I scan only the ham channels. When in the "B" VFO, I scan all of the "action" frequencies -- using the same scan memories. Usually when on the bicycle, I plan to keep the radio quiet and only scan frequencies that I plan to talk on if called. But the "entertainment value" of the B-channel scan is wonderful -- and I can listen to broadcast radio as I also scan the ham channels while commuting to work.

Even my ten-year-old SMC-33 speaker-mike plugs directly into the TH-F6A (and its three remote buttons work just fine). The belt clip is nice and tight -- there is no chance of this radio falling off of your belt (or bouncing out of your handlebar bag) when it is jostled.

So, what don't I like about the TH-F6A? The volume control (concentric with the tuning dial on the top of the radio) moves easily, and I often accidentally spin the two dials together. I'm going to have to find a way to add some extra friction there.

And I have to figure out if my existing dual-band (2-meter, 440 MHz) bicycle antenna will work -- or whether I need to invest in a three-band bicycle-mobile antenna.

BMHA "KICK-IN-THE-BUTT" COMMITTEE:

CHAIRPERSON SOUNDING OFF!

BMHA Members;

I'm Phil Michaelis, KC2GFV. I'm more "biker" than "hammer". I got my first bike when ten and had ridden continually until forty when stomach problems wouldn't allow me to bend over my upright. In 1989, I saw an ad for a LWB, USS recumbent and I brought one sight unseen. Saturday morning I took the big box down to the bike shop where they put the bike together. I spent the afternoon in the parking lot figuring out how to ride it. I haven't looked back since, I love recumbents.

I joined BMHA, spring 2000, when I saw an article about hams on bikes. My brother had been on me for years to get my ticket, so I did. Dayton this year will be my fourth.

I was searching the BMHA back issues, a gold mine, for an antenna suitable for my new Catrike Speed. The main components of my mobile shack are an Icom T81a quad, Midland 75-832 CB (I want to talk with the truckers before they make me road kill), and a Vista Etrex GPS. While searching, it occured to me that we haven't had a new issue for a long time, that Dayton is almost upon us with no word about this year's forum and BMHA is slowly sinking in to the sunset. I do not want that to happen!



I'm appointing my self as Chairman of the "BMHA Kick in the Butt Committee" (KB). As Chairman of the KB it is not my intension to offend, alienate, hurt any ones feelings or step on any toes. My intention is to give us collectively a swift kick in our... get the origination going! Hartley, our founder, single handedly gave us a fabulous origination. For more than ten years, he was "Mr. BMHA." Let us take the seed he planted and grow it into the premier bike/ham group that we all want and need. So, lets take the rest of this year (time limit) to get back and surpass what Hartley left us...

First, a plea to the BMHA Presidency, Directors, Editor and others as constituted in the last newsletter. Please stay and serve in your current position, at least until the end of this year. A shake up in this base group, at this critical time, would mean the demise of BMHA, in my opinion.

Second, and this is critical, lets go totally electronic. As hams, everyone should be technologically savvy. We have two great web sites, www.lafetra.com/bmha/ operated by Skip AA6KW (271 members) and a BMHA Yahoo E-Group owned by Mike NF0N (259 members). My idea is to use Skip's site as our best foot forward "public forum." That is where we will have on display Hartley's first issue and the current third quarter (after Dayton) issue of the newsletter. Really, it's not too different from its current make up. Next, let's use Mike's site as a "members only" site. This is where we will store the membership list, the library, committee stuff, the current newsletter and other information for the members only. Mike's site would be greatly expanded to serve the members.

- Newsletter: Scott KE4WMF needs to be congratulated for stepping up to the plate when know one else would. Let's increase the newsletter staff to at least three. An editor and two assistants or Senior Editor and editors or what ever the make. The newsletter is the core of BMHA and is just too much for one person, Hartley excepted. So, ok all you English majors, or wannabees, step up to the plate like Scott. My idea is to publish three issues this year on the first day of each quarter. That only gives one month to get the first issue done and out by April 1st (*Sorry... I'm already late! Ed.*). Look back at Hartley's eight page newsletters, chuck full of good info. Not a lot of white space and great content. By the end of this year, let's be up to eight pages plus advertisements. Lets go color except for content, black and white is easier to read. Everyone send in "articles, suggestions, letters, announcements, photos, artwork, - anything pertaining to the combining of bicycling with amateur radio." Time is short!
- Membership: This committee's responsibility will be to maintain the membership list and to spearhead new membership. My idea is to contact each and every member and potential member from the two websites. Make sure their information is correct including e-mail address. Get this all done before the next issue is released April 1st. Then, swing into new membership mode along with maintenance and web site work.
- Library: This committee's responsibility is to create a library and maintain it. My idea is to put all the back issues on the members only site. Create an extensive, comprehensive and searchable index of the back issues. Create a listing and files of all articles that have ever been published that have any thing to do with bike/ham. Get copies of articles where possible, with permission of the

publisher, or describe them fully including where to find them. Publications would have its searchable index as well.

- "From the top" column: The responsibility here is to write a column to put in the newsletter. My idea is that columns will be written by the Pres., V.P., Sec/Treasurer, and the KB Chair to be publish in each quarter's issue respectively. Skip would be April 1st and I would end Dec. 1st, in this year of regrouping.
- Start the "QSL Corner" and "Bits & Pieces" features again in each issue. My idea is for each of you get your QSL card in electronic format and submit them for publication. If we publish two in each issue that will help fill the newsletter, and I personal liked to see them.
- "The Pink Key" or something: Would one of you ladies like to write a column that would give a feminine perspective on bike/hamming? Just my idea some one step up and run with it.
- Artist and Cartoonist: Lets have a cartoon or two in each issue. Anybody out there named Walt D? We need to have some one make up letterhead stationery (electronic) for the committees and others to use when corresponding. Most originations have some kind of patch, hat or what ever. Let's get our name and/or logo on something that says "I bike/ham", maybe a pennant we can hang from our antennas.
- Public Relations: This committee's responsibility is to put our best face forward. My idea is to get our name and our logo out in front of the bike/ham public. On any type of ride across state, walk-a-thon or any activity that one of our members participates in needs to be publicized as a BMHA sponsored event. Get our name and logo into every bike, ham or any other publication or news media we can. This will also help in membership
- Advertising: This committee's responsibility is to sell advertising in the newsletter. My idea is to make some money and advertise products for out members. An equal mix of ham and bike stuff should be sought
- Door Prizes: This committee's responsibility is to collect prizes, bike and ham stuff, to be raffled and/or given away in Dayton. My idea is to have two sets of door prizes to give away at the forum. One set to members only, need not be present to win, every member's name in the box to be drawn. Another set to be given to attendees present. When a vendor gives us a very nice gift, let's raffle it off and make some money (Door prizes were very successful for the HF pack forum last year). Let's set a goal to have collected \$1,500. in prizes, by Dayton.
- Dayton "Show & Tell": We have our forum and the annual Ride. My idea is to also have a dual (two stalls together) outside booth, behind the prime real estate. We could set up a couple white tent canopies with name and logo banners, some folding or stacking plastic chairs, and a folding plastic table. This would allow us a place to show our mobile shacks, give out handouts or flyers about our group, socialize about bike/mobile, and in general

hang out during the three days of Dayton. The committee would need to see that the Show & Tell was manned during the event, we could take turns for an hour or so each day, see that there was information to hand out, assemble and take down, and transportation. Perhaps someone that lives close could store it for us, between shows.

- Line art, schematics, etc.: In my profession as a Mechanical Design Engineer, I use Pro/Engineer CAD software. I will make up any type of line art or schematics needed to help you build articles describing your rigs. If for instance, you want to show a small sending key attached to your handlebars or an antenna setup you have, I can model it for publication in the newsletter.

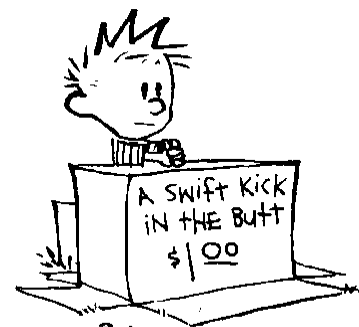
Have you noticed I kept saying "My idea is..." ? Well I have been around long enough to know that "my idea is" not necessarily the best in the world. You may disagree with me and that is fine. I want to hear all the ideas you have for BMHA and to implement them. However, if you are going to just disagree with me and not offer any constructive ideas of your own, I do not want to hear it. I will be too busy implementing the fine ideas of others in this year of regrouping. I do not want to hear negative but rather only positive comments. I'm upbeat about the future of BMHA and want to stay that way.

It should go without saying that BMHA needs your help. Please, join in with the Officers and I to help regroup. Hartley was a special individual that had time to keep this all together and running smoothly. Look over the list of suggested committees and see where you might belong or add something to the list that you can do. I don't have a lot of time but I do have a little. When we add our time together we will end up with a lot of time, to get back to and maybe surpass what Hartley left us... BMHA.

My e-mail address is pkmichaelis@yahoo.com. You can expect a reply. My cell phone number is 812-290-3909. Feel free to call me between 7:00 and 10:00pm EST on Mon, Tues, or Fri and on Sat. all day. Saturday, however, I probably will be out riding; but I will take my cell phone with me. Please call me. If I don't answer, leave a voicemail (spell name and call sign slowly) and I will call you back.

73,

Phil, KC2GFV



The Day the War Started

By Scott Laughlin, N7NET

The traffic along Arizona's SR 286 between Three Points and the border was just right—about one automobile every quarter-hour. I liked it because I was not setting a record. I was only trying to prove the statements that the human body loses only five percent of its strength every decade.

Barb, KC7BSY, had driven about half the fifty mile distance, talking with her a two-meter mobile radio set to the simplex frequency of 146.353 MHz. I followed more slowly pedaling a custom-built Bike Friday and an HT tuned to the same frequency. With three water bottles and a bag of raisins, I was set for the twenty-plus miles that lay before me. The trek was quiet and peaceful. I could smell the scent of flowers of which I knew not the name. Off in the desert and out of my view came the voices of Cactus Wrens, Curved-bill Thrashers, and the numerous voices of the ever-present Raven. Everything fit. It all had its place. Except for one glaring detail—a fixed-wing aircraft that insisted it should spend the majority of its time circling overhead. If he was so interested in my activity he might just have a scanner on board and be a licensed ham. It certainly was worth a try. Stopping, I tuned my HT to the National Calling frequency and announced I was monitoring.

Nothing!

Barb was already beyond the range of my one-watt radio. With no other options at hand I tuned back to my previous frequency and pressed on. The quiet desert scene continued to unfold before me. And I did my best to ignore the plane that continued flying its figure eights, then moving off to the east only to return and do it all over again.

I came upon a white Toyota sedan parked at the side of the roadway. This was not so strange, but the fellow seated on the hood with camera was certainly unusual. I raised a hand, a gesture of friendliness and he waved back in return.

"Where's the best place to photograph a rattle snake?" he called.

I braked to a stop and laid the bike down at the roadside.

"The ground is still a little cool for them. They generally are not very active before the soil temperature is at least seventy," I said.

I could see an expression of disappointment come over his face. He pushed himself off the hood and stuffed the throwaway camera into his pocket before moving closer.

"A fella on the Internet told me I could probably see a few snakes along this road during the last half of March."

"Well. He's probably right. But this has been a cool spring. Where you from?"

"Ohio."

The plane had returned again.

"I wonder what's with the plane?" I said.

"With the war and all, who knows. Maybe it's his job to keep an eye on things here," he said.

"War?"

"Yeah! President Bush pushed the button today, you know."

I didn't know and he didn't criticize my ignorance. He didn't have to. His face said it all.

Since our retirement Barb and I had gotten behind the curve on current affairs. But we had no idea we were this far behind. We listened to a classical music station broadcast from the University of Arizona, but we seldom tuned in to the news. We had simply let the war start without us.

Just then the sound of a jet fighter drowned out my thoughts. The small plane had moved to the east and after the jet passed rather slowly over me both aircraft flew off and were not seen again. Without any additional conversation I fetched my bike and continued on my way.

I was within radio range and on my last bottle of water when I heard the sound of two ATVs approaching. In my mirror I could see they were U.S. Army, two GIs with rifles slung over their shoulders. They slowed as they came along side and peered closely at me. But one glimpse of my silver beard and wrinkled face told them I was not the enemy. I was just an old man pedaling along the highway.

A short time later I could see Barb's camper parked in a wide place. We had lunch and I filled my water bottles before Barb moved on to the little border town of Sasabe.

The sun was low in the west when I caught up to Barb. I was tired, but more concerned about what would come next. There were no campgrounds or trailer parks in which we could stay. At last we parked near a gravel pile belonging to the county and waited there for the other shoe to drop. Nothing happened.

The next morning we traveled back north and Barb awaited my arrival at the junction where the road led east toward Arivaca. The route was hilly and we were able to maintain nearly constant communications. The ride was quiet and uneventful. The ride is grouped among the best I have ever experienced.

Have I proven the human body loses only five percent of its strength every decade? I think I have. But what I know for certain is that as an amateur radio operator I have more communications at my disposal than did General Crook, General Sherman, and General Pershing combined. Yet, I let a war start without me. Boy is my face red.

Back Issues Still Available.

You may purchase any of the 45 back issues of the BMHA Newsletter for \$1.50 each, postpaid. For info on the contents of the various issues send a business-size SASE to: BMHA, 316 East 32nd Street, South Sioux City, NE 68776-3512, and ask for the Index of Back Issues. This service available to members only.

Against The Wind

By Dick Arnold, K8RJA

Years ago while traveling in my motorhome, I enjoyed operating mobile CW. At that time it was kind of a novelty to work a mobile CW station. Not so today; with the availability of the small HF rigs on the market, it's not unusual at all to hear a number of stations signing /M. After the sale of my motorhome, my small car didn't have room for a cell phone let alone an HF radio, so my mobile operation ceased.

My ex-aerobic instructor XYL insists that I exercise, which started me riding a bicycle rather than working out in our basement gym. After being knocked down twice while riding on the highways, my biking was reduced to cruising the subdivision. Then came the bike path, a safe thoroughfare stretching several miles through wooded and here-to-for inaccessible areas and ending at a park on Lake St. Clair. With renewed interest in biking, I bought a 21-speed mountain bike. Wow, twenty- one speeds? I thought I would never have a need for that many gears, but when the wind comes up, I was surprised to learn how many gears are useful. Well after a few trips to the beach, I noticed the many natural antenna supports available and started taking my QRP rig and some wire antennas along. I have had many pleasurable hours operating K8RJA/8 from either the beach or other local parks.

One day while surfing the Internet I ran across VE3JC's web page where he displayed his HF mobile bike setup. This started me thinking about operating while biking, but put it on the back burner because of the HF antenna problems. A couple of warm days recently encouraged me to begin my spring rides. I hopped on the bike and pedaled to beach, but on the return trip it was against the wind, so geared down, traveling 4 MPH, I had lots of time to think and started planning an HF installation on my bike. By the time I arrived back at my QTH, I had it all worked out in my head.

The first thing I did was to bolt an antenna mirror-mount bracket to the frame. After trying every conceivable location, I settled on the rear wheel support tube near the seat post. This put the Hustler mast at about a 45-degree angle, which serves to keep the antenna clear of strikes from low branches. Then I had to find a place to mount the mini paddle where I could reach it without taking my hand off of the handlebar grip. I tie-wrapped the paddle under the grip where I could reach it while still being able to steer, shift gears and use the brakes. Then I stuffed the 20-meter MFJ Cub and the battery into the handlebar bag, donned the earbuds and went for a test ride. After a couple of T-E-S-T transmissions I tuned around and heard an N5 station calling CQ. I answered with my call and was rewarded with a 559 signal report from Texas. This, from one watt output to a mobile antenna mounted on a bicycle! I was pumped as I returned home with plans to make the radio installation more secure and in a better position for tuning, and I also needed to find a more comfortable position for the paddle. After some experimentation, the paddle ended up on an adjustable bracket on top of the handlebar just forward of the handgrip.

Isn't it amazing how finding something new in radio can fill you with enthusiasm? I'm looking forward to some longer rides this summer while talking to the world from my bike/mobile. In my search for ideas for this project, I was

surprised to learn that there are hundreds of hams operating while biking. I recently applied for membership in the BMHA and I'm anxious to share some experiences and information with other members.

One thing I've learned already: Whenever operating a radio, whether riding a bike or driving a vehicle, mobile operation can be hazardous to your health if you don't pay attention to what's going on around you, aviators call it SA, or situation awareness. Don't get so distracted by the radio that you lose your SA.



Heart Attack Alone

From Our Friends at Adventure Cycling

Without help, the person whose heart stops beating properly and who begins to feel faint has only about 10 seconds left before losing consciousness. However, these victims can help themselves by coughing repeatedly and very vigorously. A deep breath should be taken before each cough and the cough must be deep and prolonged, as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest.

A breath and a cough must be repeated about every two seconds without letup until help arrives or until the heart is felt to be beating normally again. Deep breaths get oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it regain normal rhythm.

In this way, heart attack victims get to a phone, and between breaths, call for help. Tell as many people as possible about this - it could save their lives.



Summer Cycling Tips...

from Our Friends at Adventure Cycling

Fluid Replacement

During rigorous exercise in a warm environment, it is not uncommon for athletes to lose one to two liters of perspiration per hour. Finding the correct fluids to replace those lost during a workout can be exhausting in itself.

Essentially, there are three categories of sports drinks: 1) Fluid replacing...water is in this category, 2) Carbohydrate Loading, and 3) Nutrient Supplement drinks. All of these drinks should be maintained at a cool (approximately 40F) temperature, so they exit the stomach quickly, which promotes the availability of fluids to the rest of the body.

Examples of fluid replacing drinks: water, Exceed Fluid Replacement Drink, Gatorade, and 10-K. These drinks are appropriate for high-intensity, short duration events lasting an hour or less. The primary concern is to prevent an excessive rise in core body temperature. Evidence that using a carbohydrate-loading drink to improve performance during activities of this length are inconclusive.

Shaklee Performance Maximum Endurance Sports Drink, Gatorade, and Exceed High Carbohydrate Source are all examples of carbohydrate-loading fluids. The purpose of these drinks is to not only replace lost fluids, but to produce more glycogen for greater endurance. Activities lasting between one and three hours is best suited for these drinks. Ultraendurance athletes, those who participate in events up to eight hours long, may benefit from nutrient supplement drinks. Some examples include Gatorpro, Exceed Sports Nutrition Supplement, and Ultra energy. These fluids help replace electrolytes and other nutrients which are lost over this prolonged period of exercise.

Here are five easy guidelines for fluid replacement:

- Choose the right category - Figure out the duration of the exercise and choose accordingly.
- Keep the drinks cool - This helps the fluids leave the stomach and aid the rest of the body quicker
- Practice fluid intake - Ingest fluids an hour prior to and during workouts to aid the transition to completion
- Consume fluids frequently - If you wait until you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated
- Choose something you like - If you don't think it tastes good, you won't drink it
- Don't be a Summer Casualty
- Keep Cool
- Keep Hydrated

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is a more serious form of heat illness caused by inadequate fluid and/or electrolyte replacement during exercising in the heat. It is an insidious, slowly progressive, peripheral vascular collapse, or "shock" syndrome.

When exercising, the brain and muscles need an increased blood flow to function. The blood vessels vasoconstrict, (making them smaller), from other parts of the body to compensate. At the same time, the skin also needs an increase in blood flow to help cool the body down. The blood vessels close to the skin vasodilate, (enlarge), and the body is cooled in the form of sweat. Due to the increased demands placed upon the body by the skin, muscles, and viscera, and with an inadequate, fluid and/or electrolyte replacement, the cardiovascular system goes into circulatory stress, resulting in heat exhaustion.

The sign and symptoms of heat exhaustion are weakness or unsteadiness, throbbing headaches, faintness, dizziness, loss of appetite, fatigue, nausea, hair standing up on arms and chest, and diffuse sweating. The symptoms develop due to reduced blood volumes and/or improper amounts of electrolytes (too much or too little).

A person in heat exhaustion may appear ashen and gray, and the skin will be cold and clammy. Their vital signs will be relatively normal although the pulse may be rapid, and the pulse pressure is found to be low. The treatment for someone in heat exhaustion is to remove them from the activity and the environment. Begin cooling them with cold towels or whatever is available.

Replace lost fluids immediately and electrolytes if they are low; in severe cases it is imperative that the fluids be replaced intravenously. Transport to the hospital in severe cases. Persons may become unconscious if treatment is not rendered. Monitor the urine for 24 hours, noting the amount and appearance. If no urine is passed within 6-12 hours, refer to medical care immediately for persons may be in acute renal failure. Discontinue exercise until heat exhaustion is well under control.



Keeping Tabs

by Scott Laughlin, N7NET

On several occasions I have managed to marry two of my favorite hobbies -- cycling and amateur radio. Another opportunity that has presented itself illustrates the possibility of cyclists/hams to use a relatively new mode called Automatic Positioning Reporting System (APRS).

Moving slowly, we cyclists are usually the last to become disoriented or lost, but to prevent this from occurring we could use a Global Positioning System (GPS), a portable system that calculates its bearing by communicating with overhead satellites and displays its position in degrees, minutes, and seconds of latitude and longitude. Amateur radio has taken this concept a step further by allowing these GPS readings to be seen by other individuals who might be hundreds of miles away. And it is called APRS.

APRS is a bit removed from traditional amateur radio, but the concept became more clearly defined after meeting with two friends, electrical engineers Borus and Daniel, on holiday from their homes in Switzerland. Mid-April was the month of our second meeting in as many years.

Their chosen field has taken them into the world of business and computers -- limiting the effects of computer virus and industrial espionage through development of software and hardware. As representatives of their respective companies, they must travel to some of the most influential cities in the world, as many as eighty-two separate locations for one engineer. And in so doing these two hams experiment as much as possible with APRS.

During our most recent meeting, I learned Borus had installed APRS on his bicycle. His system consists of a GPS, transceiver, terminal node controller, antenna, and a battery to power everything. Because of self imposed weight restrictions, Borus had chosen to stay with 1.5 watts power output, not enough to always reach the mountain-top radios around Europe called digipeaters. Digipeaters are special

radio/controller devices that repeat the signals they hear, sending them on to distant places. Currently Daniel is operating a portable "digi" in the fringes while they continue to experiment with their system.

After listening to a host of problems facing Borus' APRS project, I suggested using a gel-cel battery because of its reduced weight and generous power. But that is not the answer Borus finds satisfactory. "I can take what equipment I need for the job and put it in a truck. No problem there. But it is a bike I'm trying to put this stuff on and I want to keep it a bike." I see his point.

During the period of our friendship, they've shared with me a few of their technical APRS problems and I find it remarkable how they systematically reach fitting solutions. I'm astounded when I recall seeing their first terminal node controller, a "home-brewed kit" contained in what looked very much like a plastic pill box. I have every reason to believe by next year they will have reached an appropriate solution to these new difficulties.

It may not be so long before cyclists/hams may send APRS signals to those having an interest in such things.

Heads Up

From Our Friends at Adventure Cycling

Parked cars can be a serious hazard to bicyclists. It's crucial to keep a sharp eye out for people sitting in cars. They may suddenly open the door, or pull away from the curb without properly looking.

Try to watch several cars ahead to allow ample time to react to such occurrences. Keep aware of your situation, also. If cars are passing on the left, and a car door opens in front of you, don't automatically veer out into traffic. It's best to avoid such by watching ahead, but if you must choose, take the door prize instead of the moving vehicle.

Membership Application

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South Sioux City, NE 68776-3512

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BMHA's Official Logo

The next time you need to order new QSL cards, don't forget to include the BMHA logo in your design. Here's the official logo, designed by Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U; and restored by Scott A. Farrell, KE4WMF.



BMHA NEWSLETTER

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America
C/o Mike Nickolaus, NF0N
316 E. 32nd St.
South Sioux City, NE 68776-3512

First Class Mail

More from Our Friends at Adventure Cycling

How to Beat the Heat

With summer heating up, it's time for a refresher course on how to safely ride when the temperature hits the century mark. As medical coordinator for the Hotter'n Hell Hundred, Dr. Jerry Alexander dispenses expert advice on hydration and heat-related problems. The late August rally and racing event in Wichita Falls combines heat and long distances - a recipe for dehydration if riders don't take precautions.

Alexander says cyclists need to train two ways to prepare for the fierce summer heat. Heat acclimation and (physical) conditioning are two different things, and you have to train for both, he said. Riders who train in the early morning hours to escape the heat are getting only half that workout.

The other key is knowing how much water or sports drink you need, since it varies with individuals and depends on distance, temperature and other factors. Getting enough liquids can take practice because thirst alone is not an indication of what your body needs.

While some rules of thumb can help - such as making sure to drink every 15 minutes even if you aren't thirsty -

Alexander suggests the "weigh-in" method. Weigh yourself before a ride, and drink as much as you can. Then weigh in again after the ride. If you've lost several pounds, you've lost that much fluid. If you come out close, you've probably hit a good balance.

While experienced cyclists know the importance of fluids, they might not know that the effects of slight dehydration can accumulate. A small imbalance, such as 1 percent dehydration a day, can add up to a real problem over several days.

He suggests that cyclists who have been doing a lot of riding in the heat "double and triple fluids" when they get home "sip on liquids all day long. Alexander also offer a caution that being in top condition doesn't mean you can slack off: A highly tuned body is more efficient at processing the liquids, so it actually needs more.

